MARVEL

158

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THOMPSON • NADLER • PERALTA • ABURTOV

CABLE

CABLE

PAST FEARS
CHAPTER 4

PULLED FROM HIS OWN ERA AND RAISED IN A FAR-FLUNG FUTURE, NATHAN SUMMERS HAS TRAVERSED TIME IN AN EFFORT TO SAVE HUMAN AND MUTANT ALIKE. HE IS THE LINK BETWEEN THE PAST, THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE. HE IS KNOWN BY MANY NAMES, BUT TO MOST HE IS SIMPLY THE MAN CALLED…

CABLE

AFTER REUNITING WITH HIS ESTRANGED DAUGHTER HOPE, CABLE SET OUT TO FIGHT A TECHNO-ORGANIC MONSTER THAT HAS BEEN TORMENTING HIM FOR YEARS. DURING THE CONFLICT, THE MONSTER DUG INTO CABLE'S MIND, FORCING HIM TO CONFRONT THEIR LONG AND SORDID HISTORY. FIRST, REVISITING THEIR CONFLICT DURING THE MESSIAH WAR, THE MONSTER TRIED AND FAILED TO STEAL YOUNG HOPE AWAY FROM CABLE. THEN, BACK TO THE AGE OF THE HELLFIRE HUNT, WHERE X-MAN LEARNED CABLE HARBORED A HORRIBLE SECRET ABOUT THE MONSTER…

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THE PAST.

PEOPLE FORM GROUPS FOR A MULTITUDE OF REASONS.

THEY HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO ACHIEVE MORE THAN INDIVIDUALS ACTING ALONE.

THEY CAN KEEP US SAFE, HELPING US TO ACHIEVE WHAT WE'RE NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO BY OURSELVES.

BUT EVERY GROUP NEEDS A *LEADER.*

AN INDIVIDUAL WHO TAKES RESPONSIBILITY. WHO EXERTS THEIR POWER AND OPINIONS OVER OTHERS.

THIS WAY, GUYS! IT'S A SHORTCUT.

A PERSON WHO CAN SEE DANGER *BEFORE IT HAPPENS...*

...BECAUSE THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING OUT THERE, WAITING FOR US.

WATCH OUT!

IT'S GONNA GET YOU!

HUNH!

BUT WHEN A LEADER GIVES IN TO *FEAR*...

OW...

WHA--? BUT IT WAS--

WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU, DAYSPRING?

...THEY'RE NO LONGER EQUIPPED TO TAKE THE REINS BECAUSE IT PUTS THE WHOLE GROUP AT RISK.

THE ADIRONDACK MOUNTAINS, NEW YORK, 6:00 AM.

"I FEEL LIKE I'M LOSING THEM, *DOMINO.* THE TEAM STILL DOESN'T TRUST ME."

*YEARS AGO.**

THEY'RE JUST *KIDS* AND YOU'RE ASKING THEM TO BE *SOLDIERS.* THAT CHANGE DOESN'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT.

I KNOW... MY RULE HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO WHIP THEM INTO SHAPE WITH A STERN HAND.

BUT THEY'RE STARTING TO RESENT ME FOR THAT.

*THIS ISSUE TAKES PLACE AFTER *X-FORCE (1991) #2!* --DS

THEY REVERE YOU. THEY JUST WANNA FOLLOW A *PERSON,* NOT A SET OF COMMANDS. I HEAR THE WAY THEY TALK--

I CAN READ THEIR MINDS. THEY THINK I'M A GRUMPY OLD MAN, OUT OF TOUCH, TOO MILITARISTIC.

I'M AFRAID THEY COULD BE RIGHT.

PROFESSOR, ROUTE POWER TO THE CENTRAL HOLO-CORE. INITIATE BOOTING SEQUENCE.

INITIATING.

MAYBE I'M NOT CUT OUT FOR THIS. I NEVER EXACTLY ASKED FOR IT...

THE PEOPLE BEST SUITED TO LEAD ARE THOSE WHO DON'T SEEK IT OUT.

LEADERSHIP IS THRUST UPON THEM, AND THEY ACCEPT THEIR DUTY BECAUSE THEY MUST. JUST LIKE YOU DID WITH *X-FORCE.*

PROVE THEM WRONG. TELL THEM THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR PAST. SHOW THEM THAT YOU'RE JUST LIKE THEM.

THEY'RE NOT READY. NOT YET.

SOUNDS LIKE ***YOU'RE*** THE ONE WHO ISN'T READY.

PROFESSOR, INITIATE SIMULATED ENVIRONMENT TESTING.

RUNNING THROUGH THE GAMUT OF LOCATIONS, NATHAN.

FIRST UP, SAVAGE LAND.

HOW CAN YOU EXPECT THEM TO FOLLOW YOUR ORDERS IF THEY DON'T KNOW THE ***REAL*** YOU?

SOLDIERS ONLY NEED TO OPERATE WITH WHAT'S PRESENT AT HAND.

SECOND, MUTANT LIBERATION FRONT BASE.

IS THAT WHAT THIS IS ALL FOR, THEN?

YES. THEY'VE PROVEN TIME AND TIME AGAIN THEY'RE NOT READY FOR THE REAL WORLD.

AND I DON'T EVEN KNOW IF THIS IS THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION. I'M DOUBTING MYSELF AT EVERY TURN...

THIRD, THE ASTRAL PLANE.

I HAVEN'T BEEN LIKE THIS SINCE I WAS A CHILD.

THEY'RE STILL KIDS. JUST REMEMBER, THEY HAVE A LOT TO LEARN FROM YOU.

THE ADIRONDACK MOUNTAINS, NEW YORK, 11:00 AM

BOOM-BOOM.

CANNONBALL.

WARPATH.

SHATTERSTAR.

DOMINO.

FERAL.

AT ATTENTION, X-FORCE!

I HOPE YOU ENJOYED THE EXTRA REST.

WHILE YOU WERE TAKING YOUR BEAUTY SLEEP, I FINISHED INSTALLING A NEW TOY.

IT'S TOO EARLY FOR THIS, SARGE.

WELCOME TO THE SKIRMISH FIELD OF OUR VERY OWN *DANGER ROOM.*

EVERY MORNING FROM NOW ON, WE'RE DOING ONE HOUR OF INTENSE COMBAT SIMULATION.

TO SHOW YOU I MEAN BUSINESS, I WON'T BE JOINING YOU IN THE FIELD.

I'LL BE WATCHING FROM THE OBSERVATION DECK. THESE HOLOGRAMS PACK A PUNCH, SO DON'T DISAPPOINT ME.

I WILL MAKE SHORT WORK OF THIS SIMULATION.

NO. WE'LL FIGHT AND SUCCEED AS ONE.

WHAT IF WE TRASH THE PLACE?

THIS IS BOGUS.

URBAN COMBAT TRAINING PROTOCOL COMMENCING.

FALL INTO POSITION, TEAM, AND WATCH EACH OTHERS' SIX.

WHY'S HE UP THERE IF WE'RE DOWN HERE?

HARD-ASS OLD MAN'S TAKIN' THE DAY OFF.

GO FIGURE. THIS IS SUCH--

KRAK

WHAT THE @$%# AM I DOING HERE?

IT'S BECAUSE OF THE MOVIE, ISN'T IT?

FERAL, NOW!

ANOTHER DANGER ROOM? REAAAAL ORIGINAL, CABLE.

DAMMIT, SWEET D! *ENOUGH* WITH THE @#%$ING BULLETS!

BLAM BLAM

SHATTERSTAR, WHAT'RE YOU WAITING FOR?!

FOR YOU FOOLS TO CLEAR THE WAY.

THE GLORY IS MINE!

WAYNE GRETZKY CALLED. HE WANTS HIS HELMET BACK.

SHING

FLATTERY WILL NOT GET YOU MERCY. ONLY THE TIPS OF MY BLADES, HEATHEN!

WHAT?! WHO INVITED THIS GUY?

YOUR CONFIDENCE WILL BE YOUR UNDOING!

UGH. YOU'RE THE *WORST.*

JUMP IN THERE. I'LL FLANK THE LOUDMOUTH.

MY STAR!

THIS IS NOT HOW WE OPERATE. ATTACK *TOGETHER!*

YEOOOOW!

WHY DON'T YOU GUYS TALK MORE WHILE YOU'RE FIGHTING?

FERAL, LOOK OU--

PATHETIC.

X-FORCE, HOW MANY TIMES WILL I HAVE TO REPEAT MYSELF? *UNITY* IS ESSENTIAL IN COMBAT.

LICK YOUR WOUNDS, GET READY AND LISTEN FOR MY ORDERS.

BOOM-BOOM. DOMINO. YOU'RE THE DISTRACTION. FIND COVER AND FIRE FROM RANGE.

YES, SIR.

BLAM BLAM

DODGE, DODGE, DODGE.

CEASE FIRE. CANNONBALL, TAKE HIM DOWN HARD.

HOOMF.

THIS'LL SHUT YOU UP.

WARPATH. FACE HIM HEAD-ON. DON'T LET UP THE ASSAULT.

SHATTERSTAR, TAKE HIS SIX!

WITH GRACE AND HONOR, MY COMPANION.

KRAK

KEEP HIM SPINNING 'TIL HE'S CORNERED.

NOTHING SWEETER THAN A LITTLE *TIP-TO-TIP* ACTION.

FERAL, LIE IN WAIT. READY ON MY GO...

BYE-BYE, LEGS!

POUNCE!

I'LL RIP YOUR THROAT OUT!

NO! BAD KITTY!

VICTORY IS EASY WHEN YOU *RELINQUISH CONCEIT.* WELL FOUGHT, SOLDIERS.

UMM, TEACHER? MR. DAYSPRING SUMMERS? MAY I BE EXCUSED?

WAS IT NECESSARY THAT THE HOLOGRAM SPEAK?

I GUESS THE OLD GRUMP WAS RIGHT.

THERE WAS NEVER A SEED OF DOUBT THAT WE WOULD HAIL VICTORIOUS.

WE ALL SAW YOU GET YOUR ASS KICKED BACK THERE.

HOW'S 'BOUT A *REAL* CHALLENGE NEXT TIME, SARGE?

I THINK WE CAN CALL IT--

--A-- *SSKRR* --ELLO? *SKRRR.*

YOU'RE CUTTING OUT. WE CAN'T HEAR YOU!

IT'S PART OF THE TEST. POSITIONS, TEAM!

SOMETHING'S WRONG!

I DON'T LIKE THIS.

I AM RETURNED, SELFFRIENDS!

NO! NONONO. NOT *WARLOCK*. YOU'RE...YOU'RE DEAD...

THIS AIN'T COOL. EVEN FOR YOU, CABLE!

DID CABLE MOURN SELF WHEN SELF DIED?

THIS ISN'T... A...

GET OUT!

WILL HE MOURN SELFFRIENDS WHEN THEIR TIME COMES?

DO NOT ENGAGE!

FALL BACK. FIND COVER!

RAOOWR!

FERAL...SUCH MEANINGLESS VIOLENCE.

LOOK OUT!

TWHACK

PROFESSOR, WHY WON'T IT SHUT DOWN? THE COMPUTER'S ATTACKING MY ARM!

IT SEEMS THERE'S AN ALTERNATE POWER SOURCE SURGING THROUGH THE BASE. SEEKING LOCATION...

DOMINO, LEND ME YOUR LUCK!

SELF WILL EXTINGUISH LIFEGLOW.

WHAT IS THIS INFERNAL BEAST?

WARLOCK'S A TECHNOLOGY... COMPUTER BEING... THING.

HE WAS OUR TEAMMATE!

BUT HE'S BEEN DEAD A LONG TIME NOW.

SYSTEM'S... NOT RESPONDING... WORK FASTER--

ARGGH!

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG, NATHAN. I'M AFRAID I'M NOT FEELING WELL...

FIGHTING A FALLEN COMRADE FOR COMBAT TRAINING. MESSED UP, CABLE.

COVER FIRE COMING YOUR WAY!

CABLE, YOU COWARD! WHERE ARE YOU?

WE'RE GETTIN' TORN UP OUT HERE!

SHUT IT, YOU TWO! FOCUS.

CRITICAL MALFUNCTION. SHUTTING DOWN. GOODBYE...

PROFESSOR!

CABLE, STOP THE TEST!

THEY'RE REALLY HURT! DO YOU WANT THEM TO... TO--

FRIENDTABITHA. AREN'T YOU GLAD TO SEE FRIENDWARLOCK?

THIS ISN'T FUN ANYMORE!

SELFFRIENDS NOT HAVING GOOD TIME? I DO THIS FOR *YOU.*

THIS IS OVER!

NEGATIVE. FAMILY. FOE. SEPARATION. END. FLEE.

ALONE.

FOOM

ZHOOM

GET AWAY!

HIS ARM...

THIS IS GETTIN' REALLY WEIRD.

...

WE MUST HELP OUR LEADER.

NO...STAND DOWN. AWAIT HIS ORDERS.

YOU'VE GROWN SO OLD.

BUT YOU'RE STILL THE SAME.

A SCARED LITTLE BOY, LOST IN THE WOODS.

NO...IT CAN'T BE *YOU.* HOW DID YOU FIND ME?

RUN!

WHAT'S GOIN' ON?

IT'S JUST MIND GAMES!

ABANDON NO ONE!

NO... WE CAN'T... FIGHT THIS!

TELL US WHAT TO DO, SARGE.

FALL... BACK! THAT'S AN ORDER!

NEVER YIELD. WE ARE LARGER THAN THESE PETTY IMPOSTOR ENEMIES.

X-FORCE, YOU HEARD HIM! MOVE OUT!

YOU'VE FAILED THEM.

DON'T... TOUCH THEM. YOU'RE HERE FOR ME!

YOU DIDN'T TELL THEM ABOUT US. EVEN AFTER ALL THIS TIME.

AND THAT HURTS.

YOU WEAKENED YOUR CHILDISH TEAM WITH SECRETS.

CABLE ALWAYS DID LIKE TO KEEP THINGS TO HIMSELF.

IF YOU HAD *SHARED YOUR FEAR*, THEY WOULD'VE STOOD A CHANCE.

NOW, YOU WATCH.

ARGGH!

GET OFFA ME--

YARRRG!

I SAID, WATCH!

IT'S GONNA KILL US!

DON'T WORRY, I *HUNGER* FOR SOMETHING ELSE.

METUUUUS!

ARGGH!

DON'T MAKE THEM PAY FOR SOMETHING *I* DID!

BLAM BLAM BLAM

HUNH!

KRUNCH

THEY DON'T DESERVE THIS.

NO. BUT NEITHER DID I.

I WILL BE HERE, *ALWAYS*, DAYSPRING. TO RUIN YOUR FAMILY.

AN EYE FOR AN EYE.

IT WASN'T MY FAULT. I WAS JUST A BOY.

I'M... SORRY...

THAT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE.

I'M SORRY, DOMINO.

THE ADIRONDACK MOUNTAINS, NEW YORK, 7:00 PM.

POOR DOMINO. SHE BARELY MADE IT OUT ALIVE.

IF IT WANTED US DEAD, WE WOULD BE. WE WERE MERELY TOYS.

WHY WOULD YOU TEST--

IT *WASN'T* A TEST. WAS IT, CABLE?

WE HAVE A RIGHT TO KNOW WHAT THAT WAS ABOUT.

IT DOESN'T CONCERN YOU.

IT'S OVER NOW. WE CAN PUT IT BEHIND US.

YOU TAUGHT US THE NUMBER ONE RULE OF TEAMWORK IS *HONESTY.*

CAN'T EVEN FOLLOW YOUR OWN DAMN RULES.

WHAT IF THAT... THING COMES BACK?

THEN I'LL HANDLE IT. BY MYSELF.

SOME LEADER YOU TURNED OUT TO BE.

COME ON, GUYS.

IF THEY DIDN'T HATE ME BEFORE, THEY DO NOW. I CAN'T BLAME THEM.

I GAVE IN TO FEAR, THINKING IT WOULD PROTECT THEM. BUT I WAS SELFISH.

I FAILED TO SEE THE DANGER. TO LET THEM IN.

TO SHOW THEM MY PAST.

TO BE CONCLUDED!

CABLE

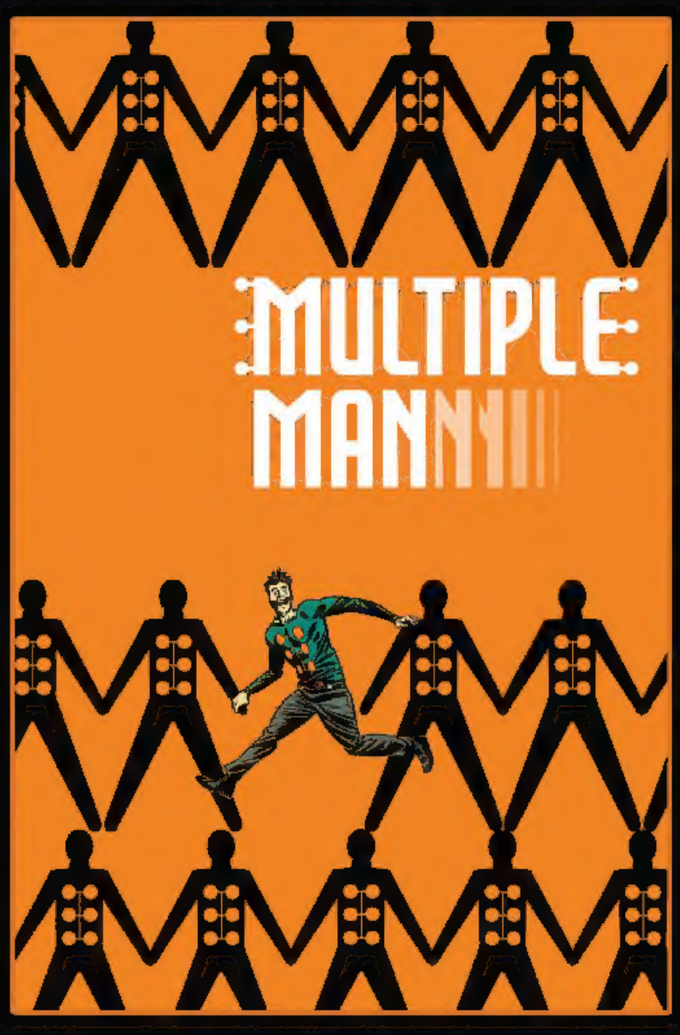
NEXT MONTH...

#159: AGE OF ASKANI AHOY!

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO
OFFICEX@MARVEL.COM

DOMINO #3
ON SALE NOW

MULTIPLE MAN #1
NEXT WEEK



WEAPON X #20
IN TWO WEEKS

ZONE